

## **Request for Proposals**

# **ACCESS TO ELECTRONIC CONSUMER HEALTH INFORMATION**

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### **Introduction**

The National Network of Libraries of Medicine South Central Region (NN/LM SCR) is accepting proposals for the Access to Electronic Consumer Health Information Award. The purpose of this funding is to ensure that health professionals, their patients and the general public are connected to the health information resources they need to make informed health care decisions.

This solicitation will focus on projects designed to improve access to electronic consumer health information for such groups and organizations as: consumers, the underserved and minority health care professionals, public health workers, public libraries, and community-based and faith-based organizations. The proposed projects may target individuals and organizations providing health information to the public, as well as targeting the public directly.

The NN/LM SCR encourages all interested applicants to review the *Guide for NN/LM SCR Awardees*: <http://nnlm.gov/scr/outreach/subcontractorsguide.html>.

### **Background Information**

The National Library of Medicine's (NLM) consumer health focus began in 1998 with the development of MedlinePlus®, an easy-to-understand resource for the public. MedlinePlus® includes links to self-help groups, National Institutes of Health (NIH) consumer health information, drug and supplement information, clearinghouses, health-related organizations, list of libraries that provide health information to consumers, and clinical trials. MedlinePlus® also provides access to extensive information on over 700 specific diseases and conditions. The site is being continuously expanded to include comprehensive information on hundreds of diseases and conditions. Designed to assist the public and health professionals in locating appropriate, authoritative health information, MedlinePlus® is a selected list of quality sources. A Spanish version of MedlinePlus® has been available since September 2002.

## **Eligibility**

Network members in the NN/LM SCR (Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas). Network membership is free and open to institutions interested in providing health information. To apply for membership: <http://nnlm.gov/scr/services/member.html>.

## **Potential Projects**

Proposed projects should include several of the following elements (these are examples only and not meant to be all-inclusive). Other creative ideas for improving access to health information are encouraged.

- **Partnerships:** Developing or strengthening partnerships and connections among NN/LM members and other organizations (public, school, and/or state libraries; voluntary health agencies; community-based or faith-based organizations; health information resource centers, public health departments, etc.) that provide health information to the public.
- **Training:** Training staff of targeted organizations to search NLM's databases including PubMed®, Clinicaltrials.gov, MedlinePlus®, Tox Town®, etc., to identify, access, retrieve, evaluate, and use relevant print and electronic consumer health information resources and services; training staff of targeted organizations to provide health information services to consumers, including conducting the reference interview, understanding basic medical terminology, and obtaining full text of medical journal articles not available in their collection; training staff of targeted organizations to train others to provide consumer health information services and/or to find and evaluate consumer health information on the Internet; training groups of consumers to locate good sources of health information on the Internet; training health professionals to refer consumers to MedlinePlus® and other good sources of consumer health information on the Internet.
- **Enhanced Access:** Developing enhanced access to MedlinePlus®, ClinicalTrials.gov, and other consumer health information resources using the latest technology.

## **Amount of Funding**

Three (3) projects up to \$25,000 will be awarded.

## **Budget Guidelines**

Food is not permitted. Indirect costs (IDC) up to 25% are allowed for this award; however, it is recommended that due to the low funding level, IDC be kept to the minimum possible.

## **Period of Performance**

Up to 12 months from date of the award.

## **Evaluation Criteria**

The evaluation criteria are listed in the order of relative importance with points assigned for evaluation purposes. PROPOSALS WILL BE SCORED AGAINST THESE CRITERIA, SO PLEASE BE CERTAIN THAT ALL CRITERIA HAVE BEEN ADDRESSED. Total Possible Points: 100. Primary consideration will be given to the evaluation of technical proposals rather than cost or price. The evaluation will be based on the demonstrated capabilities of the prospective bidders in relation to the needs of the project as set forth in the RFP. The merits of each proposal will be carefully evaluated, based on responsiveness to the RFP and the thoroughness and feasibility of the technical approach proposed. Bidders must submit information sufficient to evaluate their proposals based on the criteria listed below.

### **Criterion 1**

#### **Technical Approach: 50 Points**

- The logic and feasibility of the technical approach to reaching the target group or community.
- The types of outreach services provided for the target population with consideration given to the appropriateness, creativity and cost effectiveness of the methods proposed.
- Inclusion of a timeline or implementation schedule for major events and activities.
- Plans for evaluating the success of the approach for meeting the information needs of the target group.
- Inclusion of partnerships with other libraries and organizations to improve the target population's access to health information.
- Statement or plan to continue support of services beyond the project period.
- The extent to which the proposed project adds value to other initiatives to improve the target population's access to the Internet.

## Criterion 2

### Community Targeted: 20 Points

- Information on the target population should be provided. Estimates of the potential population and the portion expected to be reached should be included.
- Target group or population is described and the actual or perceived need for the proposed program is discussed. Estimation of the program's potential impact on future information services to this group or population is discussed.

## Criterion 3

### Project Support: 15 Points

- Experience of the proposed personnel in developing and conducting promotional and/or training programs in health information for patients, the public or health professionals. Preference will be given to bidders with prior experience/knowledge of the target group and experience in providing PubMed®, MedlinePlus®, and Internet training. If the bidder has no prior experience in developing and conducting related programs, indication should be provided concerning the steps that will be taken to obtain adequate background or experience prior to carrying out the project.
- Preference will be given to organizations that have prior experience working with the target group or those willing to take steps to obtain such experience prior to carrying out the project.
- Evidence of institutional facilities and resources adequate to support the proposed program.
- Letter of commitment from bidder's institutional administration, and letters of commitment from administrations of all agencies involved or targeted in the project.

## Criterion 4

### Project Evaluation: 15 Points

- Evaluation should measure project objectives and their outcomes. Proposed evaluation tools should reflect these measurements.
- In developing an evaluation mechanism, attention should be given to how successful the project will be in meeting the information needs of the target group.

## **Deliverables**

Awardees(s) shall prepare and submit quarterly reports and a final report detailing project activities, including progress made toward goals and problems encountered. Other reporting requirements such as completion of outreach reporting activity forms may also be required. Instructions for reporting will be provided to the principal investigators of projects selected for funding.

## **Publication and Publicity**

The Subcontractor shall acknowledge the support of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) whenever publicizing the work under this contract in any media by including an acknowledgment substantially as follows:

*This project has been funded in whole or in part with Federal funds from the National Library of Medicine, National Institutes of Health, Department of Health and Human Services, under Contract No. N01-LM-6-3505 under the Houston Academy of Medicine-Texas Medical Center Library.*

## **National Institutes of Health (NIH) Public Access Policy Requirement**

In accordance with the NIH Public Access Policy (<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-08-033.html>) investigators must submit or have submitted for them their final, peer-reviewed manuscripts that arise from NIH funds and are accepted for publication as of April 7, 2008 to PubMed Central (<http://www.pubmedcentral.nih.gov/>), to be made publicly available no later than 12 months after publication. As of May 27, 2008, investigators must include the PubMed Central reference number when citing an article in NIH applications, proposals, and progress reports that fall under the policy, and was authored or co-authored by the investigator or arose from the investigator's NIH award. For more information, see the Public Access webpage at: <http://publicaccess.nih.gov/>.

## **Website Compliance**

If a website is developed under this award, the website must adhere to Section 508 compliance. Resources for this compliance include the *National Library of Medicine Web Applications/Site Development Guidelines* (<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/web/documentation/index.html>) and *Summary of Section 508 Standards* (<http://www.section508.gov/index.cfm?FuseAction=Content&ID=11>).

## **Submission Deadlines**

A Letter of Intent must be provided no later than close of business July 1, 2008. The Letter of Intent can be submitted electronically, by mail, or by fax. Your

expression of intent is not binding but will greatly assist in planning for proposal evaluation.

Proposals must be received by August 1, 2008, 5:00pm, CST.

For further information, contact:

Karen J. Vargas, Consumer Health Outreach Coordinator  
National Network of Libraries of Medicine  
South Central Region (NN/LM SCR)  
Houston Academy of Medicine-Texas Medical Center (HAM-TMC) Library  
1133 John Freeman Blvd.  
Houston TX 77030-2809  
Phone: 1-800-338-7657 (AR, LA, NM, OK and TX only)  
Fax: 713-790-7030  
Email: [karen.vargas@exch.library.tmc.edu](mailto:karen.vargas@exch.library.tmc.edu)

# ACCESS TO ELECTRONIC CONSUMER HEALTH INFORMATION

## Proposal Instructions

A detailed plan must be submitted indicating how the project will be implemented. All elements outlined below must be addressed in as much detail as necessary to demonstrate a clear understanding of the work being undertaken.

Please prepare your proposal according to the following outline:

### 1. Cover Sheet:

- a. Unique proposal title
- b. Principal Investigator's
  - i. Name
  - ii. Agency and/or health sciences library
  - iii. Address
  - iv. Telephone number
  - v. Fax number
  - vi. Email address

### 2. Summary: Provide a one paragraph summary of the proposal.

### 3. Statement of Work: The Statement of Work shall include technical requirements and specific tasks. Project descriptions are expected to be succinct in addressing the following:

- a. **Identification of Need:** Explain why there is a need and provide data on the need for information outreach to the target population.
- b. **Description of Target Population and Geographic Area to be Covered:** Identify the specific libraries and organizations that will participate in the program, both those carrying out the project and those receiving the services. For each organization participating in the project, including any branches and satellite locations, information must be provided on demographics of the populations served; geographic areas covered; connectivity to the Internet; the number of workstations available for public access to the Internet; the number of

workstations available for staff access to the Internet; the consumer health information resources currently available; and the consumer health information services currently provided.

**c. Project Description:** Describe the project in detail to include the following:

- i. State the goal(s) of the project and the specific objectives you hope to achieve. Explain how the proposed project will ensure that the local and/or state public health workforce is connected to the information resources.
- ii. Provide a detailed plan of the outreach services and methods that will be used during the course of the project, and include expected outcomes. Ensure that each objective has an equivalent methodology.
- iii. Indicate the rationale for the plan and relationship to comparable work elsewhere, if known. Review pertinent works already published and relate them to the proposed approach.
- iv. Provide evidence of experience in training and support of health professionals in the use of PubMed®, MedlinePlus® and other National Library of Medicine (NLM) databases.
- v. Provide an implementation schedule for all activities to be undertaken during the period of performance.

**4. Establishment of Baseline Data:** Baseline data shall include information about the target community and environment and their current methods of access to information. A generic baseline questionnaire containing a suggested method for obtaining the type of information required can be requested from the NN/LM SCR office. Bidders are NOT REQUIRED to follow this format; it is offered as a guide for data collection.

A baseline survey need NOT be done before submitting the proposal. This may be done in the first quarter of the project, but a plan for determining a baseline should be described in the proposal.

**5. Publicity:** Provide a reasonably detailed plan for promoting the project to the targeted community.



- 6. Facilities/Institutional Support:** Describe the (bidding) institution, its resources and services, as it pertains to the statement of work.

Include a letter of commitment from the bidder's institutional administration, and letters of commitment from the administration of all libraries and organizations involved in or targeted in the project. Include a description of how this project will build on other initiatives to improve public access to the Internet, if applicable.

- 7. Personnel:** Identify all project personnel. Include a narrative summary of qualifications as they relate to the statement of work and project responsibilities. Evidence of the Principal Investigator(s) ability to manage a project of similar scope should be provided. A tabular summary of estimated hours of project work and percentage of total hours worked should be provided for all personnel. Include curriculum vitae for all proposed personnel.

If a position is new and will not be filled by current staff, please provide a detailed job description and minimum qualifications for the position.

- 8. Continuation of Activities after Project Completion:** Describe intent to continue project services to target community after completion of the project. What services, if any, should be continued, and how should they be funded? Describe any plans for sharing results of the project with participants.

- 9. Evaluation Plan:** Explain how you will evaluate the project. Discuss how you will know that you have achieved each objective. Applicants should consult *Measuring the Difference: Guide to Planning and Evaluating Health Information Outreach* or the NN/LM SCR office when developing needs assessments and/or evaluation plans. The *Guide* and three new supplemental booklets are currently available online at: <http://nnlm.gov/evaluation/guide>.

The evaluation plan should be closely tied to the Statement of Work and the project goals and objectives. The overall evaluation should seek to identify the information needs and behaviors of the public health workforce; and determine the usefulness of information products/services used in practice settings. Anecdotal summaries will be acceptable as appendices to the overall evaluation. Recommendations for future services/products geared toward the targeted community should be based on stated evaluation methodologies. Recommendations for future services/products geared toward the targeted community and identification of needs that could not be met should also be included.

**10. Other NLM or NN/LM South Central Region Support:**

Information on grants/contracts/competitive purchase orders with the NLM or the NN/LM SCR that were funded previously, are currently active, pending review or funding, or being prepared for submission, must be provided.

**11. Cost Proposal Instructions:** Include a detailed budget in spreadsheet format providing a breakdown and written justification for the costs included in each expenditure category.

Funds may be requested for the following (these are examples only and not meant to be all-inclusive):

- Salaries of project personnel
- Indirect costs (IDC) **up to 25%** are allowed for this award; however, it is recommended that due to the low funding level, IDC be kept to the minimum possible.
- Rental or purchase of equipment and software
- Travel necessary to support the project
- Developing, producing, and distributing promotional materials
- Gathering and analyzing baseline data
- Exhibit costs
- Evaluation costs

If IT/computer hardware is proposed in response to this CFA, please include the following as part of your cost proposal:

- For IT/computer hardware under \$3,000 – submit catalog pricing
- For IT/computer hardware \$3,000 or more – submit three (3) vendor quotes (valid preferably for 60 days, minimum of 30 days). Quotes may include General Service Administration (GSA) price lists. Reference <http://www.gsa.gov>.

Vendor quotes are necessary to determine price reasonable for purchase of \$3,000 or more. The absence of competitive quotes must be documented and justified.

**12. Submission Instructions:** Submit one (1) original, five (5) copies and one (1) electronic version (Microsoft Word) of the proposal. Additional documentation such as letters of support, charts, or other supporting material may be submitted via email or regular mail to the address below:

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Houston Academy of Medicine-Texas Medical Center (HAM-TMC)  
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